

where he had lived and moved and had his being almost since childhood, was closed against him for ever. But so engrossed was he in a new work that he wasted no sigh of regret over his expulsion. Of late years he had ceased to care much for the University, as his call to a larger field of operations became more clear. He was beginning to think more about the powers of his disciples as missionaries, and less about their scholar ship. 'If,' he wrote, 'divinity were learned on that manner that apostles did, it should profit much more than it doth now by state of school, as priests now without such state (of scholar ship) profit much more than men of such state ..... And thus men of school travail vainly for to get new subtleties, . . . . and the profit of Holy Church by this way is put aback.' The bad reception given to his doctrine on the Eucharist at its first appearance in the schools seems to have disgusted him. About that time he wrote: \* An unlearned man with God's grace does more for the Church than many graduates.<sup>1</sup> Scholastic studies, he said, rather breed than destroy heresies, as may be seen in the acceptance given to Transubstantiation by Oxford theologians.<sup>1</sup> This attitude of mind was both good and bad for Wycliffe. It was good in so far as it detached him from nice speculations, and fitted him for his work as a popular reformer. His great merit was this, that he appealed from the Latin-reading classes to the English-speaking public, from thoughtless learning to common sense. Yet this system of propaganda had the defects of its qualities. The Poor Priests whom he trained up were some of them too ignorant and simple. This was partly because he had connected his religion with the absolute ideal of apostolic poverty. The well-to-do, who are generally the best educated, were practically debarred from becoming his missionaries ; few rich young men were found willing to sell all they had and give to the poor. The Lollard preachers were drawn more and more, as time went on, from the lower and uneducated classes who had little to lose by renouncing possessions. To connect blessedness with the states of poverty and ignorance was an error which should have died with St. Francis of Assisi. Unfortunately Wycliffe, himself a learned man and thoroughly

<sup>1</sup> Matt., 428; *Dialogus*, 53-4.